

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRESS SERVICE



Release - Immediate

WASHINGTON, D. C.

September 1, 1931. *Handwritten:* Mr. Henderson
Mr. Cunniff
Mr. [unclear]
Mr. [unclear]

HUNTING MOUNTAIN LIONS SHOWN IN NEW U. S. FILM

Damage done by predators theme of "The Cougar Hunt"
Department of Agriculture thriller

Handwritten: Return to Editor
after a look
(not pressing
seen [initials])
~~Handwritten:~~

"The Cougar Hunt", a one-reel motion picture sponsored by the Biological Survey, has been completed and released by the Office of Motion Pictures, U. S. Department of Agriculture. It shows how government hunters of predatory-animals do their work, special reference to the mountain lion, and portrays a thrilling lion hunt. The Office of Motion Pictures regards it as one of the most spectacular educational film it has ever issued.

The picture includes striking close-ups of Mr Felis Concolor, who has many names, such as "panther", "catamount", "cougar", "mountain lion" and "puma." This animal inhabits western wilds, having been practically exterminated in the East. So in order to film a genuine cougar hunt by bona fide Government hunters in typical cougar country, a motion picture crew from the Office of Motion Pictures of the Department of Agriculture journeyed from Washington, D.C., to Utah. Here in Salina Canyon, in the south-central part of the State, on the rim of the Great Basin, the cougar hunt was "shot".

The opening scenes show wild animals in action; a coyote breakfasting on freshly killed chicken; a wolf at a lamb supper; a mountain lion, prince

of predators, poised above its prey.

Uncontrolled predators exact a heavy toll of livestock and game, often presenting a staggering problem to the western stockman and game conservationist. The individual rancher has been unable to cope with the problem. So the Biological Survey comes to his rescue and professional hunters are employed to hunt the predators in those regions where they have become an economic menace.

The story centers around a rancher who finds on his range the torn carcasses of several sheep, obviously killed by a cougar. (One rancher recently lost 192 sheep in one night, killed by one cougar.) He seeks government aid, and gets it. The next sequence shows the arrival of the control leader with his crew and his "lion dogs" -- hounds trained to trail the cougar exclusively. The dogs pick up a hot trail and the hunt is on.

Through miles and miles of rough, rugged, rocky country the camera follows dogs, hunter, horsemen and cougar. There are flashes of dogs on the trail, followed by the hunters on horseback, making their perilous way over trackless country; flashes of the cougar seeking to elude its pursuers; then glimpses of the dogs and galloping horsemen again, and at last the scene where the fugitive is treed. The camera shots of the treed cougar snarling at the pack of hounds in full cry at the foot of the tree, and of the dogs leaping in their excitement, one climbing almost to within reach of the lion's claws, are unusual and dramatic.

This one-reel educational "thriller", "The Cougar Hunt" may be borrowed free except for transportation charges, or purchased at cost of printing, through the Office of Motion Pictures, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

- - - M - - -